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PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

on

FOREST INSECT INFESTATIONS IN 1952

in

Southern Idaho

by the

Forest Insect Laboratory

Ogden, Utah

Detection, reconnaissance and appraisal surveys conducted in southern Idaho during the present season have not been sufficiently extensive to provide information concerning the status of insect infestations in all parts of the forested area. Reports received from private, state and federal cooperators have supplemented observations made by personnel of the Ogden Forest Insect Laboratory but there is urgent need for much greater participation by all cooperators. It might be assumed that lack of reports indicates absence of infestations, but we have reason to believe that this is not true. We believe that the following statements are accurate for the areas concerned, but that there may be other serious infestations regarding which we have no information at the present time.

DEFOLIATORS

Spruce Budworm (*Choristoneura fumiferana*)

Defoliation by the spruce budworm in mixed stands of Douglas-fir, true firs and Engelmann spruce increased in severity and extent in 1952, particularly on the eastern half of the Boise National Forest. Practically all of the new foliage was destroyed in some areas such as south and west of Atlanta, along Beaver Creek and in the Deadwood River Drainage. Heavy defoliation was also reported near Riggins on the Payette National Forest, although there was little evidence of the budworm farther south in the Weiser and Payette River Drainages. The infestation on the Sawtooth National Forest is much reduced from what it was two years ago and we received no reports from the Challis or Salmon Forests.

Careful consideration must be given to the need for artificial control in some of the more heavily infested areas. Present indications are that if the infestation continues at the same intensity in 1953, there will be some tree mortality. Control by airplane spraying would be possible, but expensive because of the rough terrain and patchy nature of the mixed fir type. A rough estimate of the area showing noticeable defoliation on the Boise and Payette Forests is one million acres with about 200,000 acres on which part of the trees will be killed within the next two years unless natural control factors become effective or artificial control is applied.

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Pine Butterfly (*Neophasia menapia*)

This defoliator of ponderosa pine has increased rapidly within the last two years. Most of the reports have come from the Crooked River area southeast of Loman on the Boise Forest, but it is present in most ponderosa pine stands. This pest is potentially very destructive and it is possible that heavy defoliation may occur within the next year or two. Any pine stand that shows evidence of defoliation should be reported immediately.

Fir Tussock Moth (*Hemerocampa pseudotsugata*)

Between 10,000 and 12,000 acres of 40-50 year old Douglas-fir stands in Owyhee County were almost completely defoliated in 1951 but natural control, probably disease and parasites, killed the larvae before they reached maturity. An examination of the area in July 1952 failed to locate a single caterpillar.

Lodgepole Needleminer (*Recurvaria milleri*)

Heavy infestations of this needleminer are present on the Cassia Division of the Minidoka and the Porcupine District of the Targhee National Forest. Little permanent damage has occurred as yet, but these areas are being watched for symptoms of direct tree killing or a possible build-up of bark beetles in weakened trees.

BARK BEETLES

Western Pine Beetle (*Dendroctonus brevicornis*)

The only concentration of ponderosa pine trees infested by this bark beetle appears to be near Deadwood Reservoir on the Boise National Forest. Control work conducted by the Forest Service has reduced this infestation from 2,200 trees treated in 1951 to about 900 treated in 1952. and an estimated 200 new attacks this fall. It is expected that logging operations will remove the remaining timber before much additional loss occurs.

There is some infestation in the High Valley area on the Boise and scattered infested trees can be found in most of the ponderosa pine stands on both the Boise and Payette Forests and adjacent private or state lands. The presence of extensive stands that have been severely weakened by the needlecast disease may increase the danger of a build-up of bark beetle populations in the weakened trees.

Mountain Pine Beetle (*D. monticolae*)

This species has been responsible for some of the loss of ponderosa pine in the Deadwood area, especially among the younger trees. It is not so common in other areas as is the western pine beetle.

No serious infestations in lodgepole pine are known at present.

Douglas-fir Beetle (*D. pseudotsugae*)

This has been the most destructive forest insect in southern Idaho for the past 2 or 3 years. Aerial reconnaissance this year showed group kills of from a few trees up to 10 acres or more in nearly all stands of Douglas-fir. The number of trees attacked in 1951 appears to have been much greater than in 1950 and we believe there has been no decrease in 1952.

Artificial control over the entire area would be a tremendous job. There is urgent need for more research information about the habits of this insect and possible control measures.

Engelmann Spruce Beetle (D. engelmanni)

So far as we know, there are no active infestations in southern Idaho in 1952. Areas on the Payette National Forest where control work was done in 1949 and 1950 now seem to be back to a normal infestation condition; i. e., a few beetles are present, but not in numbers that threaten the killing of trees. No areas of recent blowdown have been reported to us. If any are known, they should be examined immediately.

Red Turpentine Beetle (D. valens)

This beetle, which has usually been considered as of little importance may prove to be one of the major factors in the deterioration of reserve ponderosa pine stands following logging. A good example of this condition exists on the Middle Fork of the Weiser. This is a problem that will require further study.

Prepared by
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31

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